



# IOWA RECOVERY TIMES

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**Safer, Stronger,  
Smarter**

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## FLOOD FORUMS BRING FLOOD RECOVERY INFORMATION TO IOWANS

**D**uring August and September, the Rebuild Iowa Office hosted three Flood Forums in areas of the state primarily affected by the 2008 floods. Each Flood Forum offered an opportunity for Iowans to find out more about programs they may be eligible for, as well as how to protect themselves and their property during and after disasters.

Federal and state agency representatives met with local recovery partners in Cedar Rapids, Wapello and Mason City to remind Iowans about the help that is available to those recovering from the 2008 storms and flooding.

The success of the three Flood Forums led to the



*Wapello-area residents listen to presentations from local, state and federal recovery partners at the Flood Forum on August 26.*

Rebuild Iowa Office hosting a fourth forum which was broadcast to additional flood-affected communities (including Johnston, Elkader, Iowa City, Vinton and Waterloo) via Iowa Communications Network

(ICN) classrooms.

“At each of our Flood Forums, we encountered impacted Iowans who were hearing about some of the available recovery programs

*(Continued on page 2)*

## TICKET TO HOPE PROVIDES FREE COUNSELING TO THOSE AFFECTED BY 2008 DISASTERS

The Iowa Department of Human Services has launched the Ticket to Hope program offering no-cost professional mental health counseling to cope

with lingering stress for survivors of the 2008 storms, flooding and tornadoes.

The program is aimed at people who are uninsured, whose insurance does not

cover mental health benefits, or who have exhausted the mental health service provisions of their insurance, according to Bill

*(Continued on page 3)*

## STATE, FEMA JOINT FIELD OFFICE TRANSITIONS TO IOWA RECOVERY CENTER

On August 31, the State of Iowa and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Joint Field Office in Urbandale became the Iowa Recovery Center (IRC). What does that mean for the people of Iowa and the state's disaster recovery efforts?

"It will mean FEMA will remain focused on those affected by the floods and severe storms of 2008 and continue to work closely with our State partners in the recovery process," said Kay Phillips, who was named Director of the Iowa Recovery Center. "Simply put, FEMA will still be here for the people of Iowa."

Normally, FEMA officials close a Joint Field Office when most of its immediate recovery work is completed. The federal work is then transitioned to a regional FEMA office where FEMA officials would continue to work closely with State personnel to close out major projects over the next few years.

Because of the magnitude of Iowa's 2008 disaster, the IRC will stay in Des Moines to continue the recovery mission. The IRC will also have an office in Cedar Rapids and a staging area in Dike for demobilized mobile homes.

"The transition to the Iowa Recovery Center will mean continued

collaboration with our FEMA partners," said Iowa's State Coordinating Officer Patrick J. Hall. "Through our efforts at the Joint Field Office, we've made substantial progress and expect that progress to continue in the Iowa Recovery Center."

At this stage of the disaster, much of the emphasis is on the Public Assistance (PA) program. To date, FEMA has obligated more than \$725 million in Public Assistance to the state, local governments and eligible non-profit agencies. Many of the projects involve the reconstruction of public buildings, roads and bridges.

### FLOOD FORUMS (continued from page 1)

and assistance for the first time," said Rebuild Iowa Office Executive Director Lt. General Ron Dardis. "This outreach emphasizes the Rebuild Iowa Office's continued goal of ensuring that flood-affected residents know of the help and resources that remain accessible to those still recovering."

Each Flood Forum included presentations focusing on available assistance to flood-affected residents, flood insurance basics and statewide and local updates on recovery efforts. Presentations featured representatives from the Rebuild Iowa Office, local Councils of Governments, local Long-Term Recovery Committees, the Iowa Finance Authority, the Iowa Department of Economic Development, the Small Business Administration, Iowa Workforce Development and FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program, among others.



*Participants discuss flood insurance at the Cedar Rapids Flood Forum on August 12.*

Representatives from various local, state and federal agencies working in Iowa's recovery were also available to talk one-on-one with visitors and answer questions about assistance programs.

For more information about the Rebuild Iowa Office's Flood Forums and to get connected with resources and information presented, visit the Rebuild Iowa Office Web site at [www.rio.iowa.gov/flood\\_forum.html](http://www.rio.iowa.gov/flood_forum.html).

## WRCC SUBCOMMITTEE TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS IN SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

The Water Resources Coordinating Council (WRCC) will be hosting six public meetings across the state in September and October. During these meetings, the public will be able to review preliminary suggested flood plain management recommendations from the WRCC flood plain subcommittee and provide public input on the recommendations.

### Meeting Dates and Locations:

#### **Sept. 29**

Mount Pleasant, Civic Center,  
307 E. Monroe Street, 2-4 PM  
West Branch, Hoover Library and  
Museum, 210 Parkside Drive, 6-8 PM

#### **Oct. 6**

Ankeny, Public Services Building,  
220 W. 1st Street, 10 AM - Noon  
Waverly, Civic Center, 200 E. 1st Street,  
5-7 PM

#### **Oct. 8**

Lewis, Wallace Foundation Learning  
Center, Armstrong Research Farm,  
10 AM - Noon  
Storm Lake, Sunrise Pointe Municipal  
Golf Course, 4-6 PM

HF 756 requires the WRCC to “develop recommendations for policies and funding promoting a watershed management approach to reduce the adverse impact of future flooding on this state's residents, businesses, communities, and soil and water quality” and to submit these recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by 11/15/09.

For more information, visit the Rebuild Iowa Office Web site at  
[www.rio.iowa.gov/wrcc/index.html](http://www.rio.iowa.gov/wrcc/index.html).

### **TICKET TO HOPE (continued from page 1)**

Gardam, administrator of the Mental Health and Disability Services division of the DHS.

“There are many Iowans who could benefit from professional assistance to process the aftermath of the 2008 disasters and help them move forward,” Gardam said.

He said that in any given disaster, loss and trauma will directly affect many people. In addition, some people are emotionally impacted simply by being a part of the affected community. Even individuals who experience a disaster “second hand” through exposure to extensive media coverage can be affected, he said. Most disaster survivors function well under the stresses of everyday life, but with the added stress of disaster, many will show signs of emotional and psychological strain. If these normal reactions to an abnormal event become more severe as time passes, people should seek help from a mental health professional.



“Ticket to Hope will help people by offering multiple counseling sessions to individuals and family at no cost. For those who do not have benefits to cover counseling sessions, this program is invaluable in helping them regain a sense of control over their lives,” Gardam said.

Access to Ticket to Hope services is available through the Iowa Concern Hotline at 800-447-1985. The program is offered through a grant from the U.S. Department Health and Human Services and is managed by the DHS. Services will be available through June 2010.

For more information, visit the Ticket to Hope Web site at [www.tickettohope.org](http://www.tickettohope.org).

*“There are many Iowans who could benefit from professional assistance to process the aftermath of the 2008 disasters and help them move forward.”*



## The Rebuild Iowa Office



*The Rebuild Iowa Office is tasked with ensuring that the state rebuilds safer, stronger and smarter than before the 2008 disasters. The RIO is supported by a professional staff made up of existing state employees and hired full-time staff to allow it to achieve its mission, vision, goals and objectives. Throughout its initiatives, the RIO is committed to a recovery and rebuilding process that is fair and equitable to everyone.*

[www.rio.iowa.gov](http://www.rio.iowa.gov)

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## SEPTEMBER: FAMILY PREPAREDNESS MONTH IN IOWA

The tornadoes, flooding and severe storms Iowa experienced in 2008 remind us of the need to be prepared. Emergencies can occur quickly and without warning. Family Preparedness Month is an opportunity to learn more and take the simple steps to ensure you and your family are better prepared for any emergency or disaster.

There are certain things families can do to specifically prepare for and respond to the threat of flooding.

Before the possibility of flooding in your area, you can prepare by taking the following precautions:

- Take a pre-disaster inventory of personal property including photos and videos. Keeping sales receipts and the model and serial number of items will make filing a claim easier. Add insurance information to the inventory of property including company, agent, policy number and contact information.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels and other areas known to flood suddenly in your area. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warnings as rain clouds or heavy rain.
- Plan on how to quickly and safely evacuate a home or business. Prepare

a “go kit” of items you will need and think about being away for two to three days. Consider special need items such as prescription drugs, other personal items and some cash.

If a flood warning or watch is declared in your area, listen to the radio or TV for information.

If you are asked to evacuate:

- Remain calm. You are far more likely to be hurt acting in haste than by flood waters. Plan to be away for two to three days. Think about personal and special need items for you and your loved ones such as medicine, credit cards, eyeglasses, and other personal items.
- Make arrangements for pets and livestock. Unfortunately, pets are not allowed in most shelters.
- Before leaving your home, shut off all appliances and lock all doors and windows. If possible, leave a white cloth or towel on your front door knob to let officials know that you have left the area. Follow the proper evacuation route to the identified shelter.

For more information about emergency preparedness, visit [www.bereadyiowa.org](http://www.bereadyiowa.org).

### Clip & Save...

#### Federal Agencies

General FEMA Information	800.621.FEMA (3362)
TTY for hearing/speech impaired	800.462.7585
FEMA Fraud Detection	800.323.8603
National Flood Insurance Program	800.427.4661
TTY for hearing/speech impaired	800.427.5593
Social Security Administration	800.772.1213
U.S. Small Business Administration	800.659.2955
Internal Revenue Service	800.829.1040
TTY for hearing/speech impaired	800.829.4059
Tax-Related Disaster Relief	866.562.5227
Housing & Urban Development Hotline	800.669.9777
Department of Veterans Affairs	800.827.0648

#### Iowa Contacts

For up-to-date disaster and recovery information visit the Rebuild Iowa Office Web site at [www.rio.iowa.gov](http://www.rio.iowa.gov).

If you have questions about consumer fraud, contact Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division  
888.777.4590 or 515.281.5926

To volunteer or make donations, contact:  
Iowa Concern Hotline 800.447.1985

Disaster Unemployment Information 800.JOB.IOWA

Iowa Mortgage Help 877.622.4866 or  
[www.iowaMortgageHelp.com](http://www.iowaMortgageHelp.com)

Ticket to Hope crisis counseling  
(call the Iowa Concern Hotline) 800.447.1985

Iowa Other Needs Assistance 800.659.2955

Other Needs Assistance 866.434.4692